



AGENDA: June 27, 2001

7.1

CATEGORY: New Business

DEPT.: Public Works

TITLE: Stevens Creek Trail, Reach 4, Segment 2
Draft Feasibility Report

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the Parks and Recreation Commission's (PRC) recommendations to:

1. Approve the Stevens Creek Trail Reach 4, Segment 2 Draft Feasibility Study.
2. Endorse the Feasibility Study's Alignment Alternative 2.
3. Endorse the following west side access points, in order:
 - a. Sleeper Avenue Open Space
 - b. Kentmere Court
 - c. El Camino Real
4. Endorse the following east side access points, in order:
 - a. Dale Avenue/Heatherstone Way Curve
 - b. Former Emporium Site
5. Open each Reach 4 subsegment as construction is completed.
6. Pursue the environmental process leading to a Mitigated Negative Declaration.
7. Emphasize fire protection in the design of the Trail, working with Sunnyvale and Mountain View Fire Departments.

FISCAL IMPACT

The cost to pursue a Mitigated Negative Declaration for Reach 4, Segment 2 of the trail is approximately \$50,000. No funds are currently allocated for this purpose. There is no other fiscal impact associated with the recommendations at this time; however, construction of Alignment Alternative 2 with one access point on each side of Route 85 is estimated at approximately \$12 million.

APPROVED BY THE MOUNTAIN VIEW
CITY COUNCIL ON JUNE 27, 2001 WITH
MODIFICATION TO RECOM. #6 TO PURSUE A FULL EIR,
WITH FIRE PROTECTION PLAN AND SAFETY ELEMENTS TO
BE INCLUDED WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THE EIR; STAFF TO
RETURN WITH A REQUEST FOR APPROPRIATION FOR THE EIR.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

Reach 4, Segment 2 has been under consideration as the next extension of the Stevens Creek Trail since 1998. The attached chronology, Attachment A, describes the City Council's and Parks and Recreation Commission's actions since that time. There have been four focused meetings with stakeholders, three large community meetings, three Parks and Recreation Commission meetings and three City Council meetings during the last three years. The meetings maximized public participation during the Feasibility Study, and all gathered resident and stakeholder comments about the possible trail extension.

Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting

Most recently, the PRC met in special session on May 23, 2001 to consider the Feasibility Study and its recommendations, prepared by Nolte Associates. Attachment B is the staff report to the PRC, and Attachment C shows the draft minutes of the PRC meeting. The Nolte Study concluded an extension of the trail south of El Camino Real is feasible and recommended Alternative Alignment 2 as well as a minimum of one access point on each side of Route 85. Specifically, it recommended the Sleeper Avenue Open Space west of Route 85 and the Dale Avenue/Heatherstone Way curve east of Route 85 as neighborhood access points and City-owned property adjacent to Mountain View High School as the trail head. However, the report further recommended the Sleeper Avenue Open Space not be constructed and opened until the trail extension is completed to the high school.

PRC Recommendations

About 60 people attended the meeting, and many spoke about the trail extension and the Nolte Associates recommendations. Most speakers seemed to concur with the alignment alternative and access recommendations, although some speakers as well as some Commissioners preferred Alignment Alternative 1, which remains closer to the creek on the west side of Route 85 for a longer distance. However, due to terrain, construction and cost challenges as well as neighborhood concerns, the Commission believed Alternative 2 was the best overall choice and supported it unanimously.

The primary discussions from the Commissioners focused on access points, fire protection, trail opening and environmental processing.

Access Points

The Commission felt more than one access point on each side of Route 85 was desirable and recommended three on the west side and two on the east side. On the west side, they supported the Sleeper Avenue Open Space, Kentmere Court and the shopping center (Mountain View Center) adjacent to the trail on El Camino Real. The Commission unanimously felt the Sleeper Avenue Open Space and Kentmere Court should be constructed and opened

simultaneously. However, they also indicated if it was not possible to fund and construct both access points concurrently they would support proceeding with the Sleeper Avenue Open Space first. The El Camino Real access could be constructed later as a neighborhood access point rather than a trailhead as originally analyzed in the Feasibility Study. As such, it would not provide trailhead amenities such as parking or drinking fountains.

On the east side, the majority of the PRC preferred the Dale Avenue/Heatherstone Way curve first and then the former Emporium site, but they also expressed concern about parking, traffic and visibility of trail users at the curve. Again, they indicated if funding were an issue, they would support constructing and opening the Dale Avenue/Heatherstone Way access initially with the Emporium site later.

Fire Protection

There was also discussion about fire protection. In response to concerns expressed by residents, the Commission recommended emphasizing fire protection during design of the trail in conjunction with the Sunnyvale and Mountain View Fire Departments.

Trail Opening

The Commission discussed whether or not to delay neighborhood access until the entire stretch of Reach 4, Segment 2 was complete, including the trailhead at Mountain View High School, due to neighborhood concerns about traffic and parking. The Commission felt it would not be practical to keep portions of the completed trail closed and were concerned it would be difficult to fund construction of the entire trail at one time. The PRC voted unanimously to open each Reach 4 subsegment when construction is completed.

Environmental Processing

The Commission discussed at length whether to recommend a Mitigated Negative Declaration or a full Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Some speakers expressed the opinion that an EIR would provide more information and better mitigation than a Mitigated Negative Declaration.

The environmental consultant clarified that a Mitigated Negative Declaration must avoid or reduce all significant impacts to a less than significant level. On the other hand, an EIR only has to identify mitigation for significant impacts and can be approved with either significant unavoidable impacts or significant unmitigated impacts. In this regard, an EIR could theoretically produce a lower level of protection than a Mitigated Negative Declaration. Preparation of an EIR takes about twice as long as a Mitigated Negative Declaration due to extended comment and review periods. Attachment D shows the similarities and differences between an EIR and a Mitigated Negative Declaration in table format.

There are also two components in an EIR that would not be included in a Mitigated Negative Declaration: (1) a discussion of cumulative impacts of the project and other reasonably foreseeable projects; and (2) an evaluation of alternatives to the proposed project that could reduce or avoid the project's impacts while still achieving most of the objectives of the project. Additionally, an EIR also includes discussion of growth-inducing impacts, if any. These discussions may not be entirely relevant to a trail project.

The PRC unanimously recommended a Mitigated Negative Declaration. The other reaches of the trail were processed with Mitigated Negative Declarations.

Next Steps

If the Council moves forward with Reach 4, Segment 2, the next step is to conduct the environmental process. A Mitigated Negative Declaration will cost about \$50,000 and require about 10 months to prepare; however, funds have not been appropriated for environmental review. If the City Council wishes to proceed, staff will return at an upcoming meeting with a plan to prepare the Mitigated Negative Declaration, including selection of a consultant and a request for funding. Engineering and design of the trail extension can begin after completing the environmental clearance process and developing a funding plan. During the environmental review period, the Council could also direct staff to develop a phasing and funding strategy as no grants or other funding options have been identified for design and construction. A detailed schedule is not available at this time but could be prepared if Council wishes to advance the project.

AGENDA: June 27, 2001

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PUBLIC NOTICING—Agenda posting.

Prepared by:



Joan Jenkins
Transportation and Policy Manager

Approved by:



Cathy R. Lazarus
Public Works Director



David A. Muela
Community Services Director



Kevin C. Duggan
City Manager

JJ/2/CAM
907-06-27-01M-E^

Attachments:

- A Chronology
- B Staff Report to PRC
- C Draft PRC Meeting Minutes
- D Table

cc: Parks and Recreation Commission

CPM, SAA—Irwin, TPM, PM—Kim, F/c

STEVENS CREEK TRAIL REACH 4 SEGMENT 2
CHRONOLOGY OF PAST CITY COUNCIL AND PARKS AND RECREATION
COMMISSION ACTIONS

1991

December 10, 1991 City Council adopted the 1991 Stevens Creek Trail and Wildlife Corridor Feasibility Study

1992

November 24, 1992 City Council approved Mitigated Negative Declaration for Reaches 2 through 4 of the Stevens Creek Trail and Wildlife Corridor

1998

February 11, 1998 PRC reviewed updated Reach 4 alignment and approved alignment except Sleeper Open Space access and directed staff to continue studying access alternatives with neighborhood input and return to PRC in 90 days.

February 24, 1998 City Council considered updated Reach 4 alignment and approved alignment for Segment 1. Directed staff to continue studying Segment 2 (south of El Camino Real) and establish a process to maximize public input and alternatives for review, and return to City Council with results.

March 21, 1998 Staff held first neighborhood meeting to receive public input on Segment 2.

June 11, 1998 Staff held second neighborhood meeting including a workshop for public to comment on possible trail access points and trail head locations.

September 9, 1998 PRC reviewed results from two neighborhood meetings and recommended City Council study the feasibility of extending the trail to Mountain View High School with neighborhood access on the east and west sides of Route 85.

October 13, 1998 City Council approved PRC's recommendation to study the feasibility of extending the trail with access on the east and west sides of Route 85 and to specifically address issues of trail safety, parking, traffic, fire protection, environmental concerns and to continue public input.

1999

- September 14, 1999 City Council approved professional services contract with Nolte Associates to prepare feasibility study for Reach 4, Segment 2.
- November 17, 1999 Nolte commenced study and convened first focus group meetings composed of neighborhood stakeholders with concerns about the trail extension.
- November 20, 1999 Nolte convened second focus group meeting with residents with concerns about the trail extension.

2000

- May 1, 2000 Nolte convened third focus group meeting composed of neighborhood stakeholders who favor the trail extension.
- May 4, 2000 Nolte convened fourth focus group meeting with residents who favor the trail extension.
- December 11, 2000 Held community meeting to review trail and access point alternatives, findings from special studies on trail safety, parking and traffic, fire protection, environmental issues and to gather public comments on the preliminary results.

2001

- May 23, 2001 The PRC held a special session to consider the Stevens Creek Trail, Reach 4, Segment 2 Draft Feasibility Study and recommended to the City Council:
- Approve the Draft Feasibility Study.
 - Endorse Alignment Alternative 2.
 - Endorse west side access points at Sleeper Open Space, Kentmere Court and El Camino Real.
 - Endorse east side access points at the Dale Avenue/Heatherstone Way curve and the former Emporium site.
 - Open each Reach 4 sub-segment as construction is completed.
 - Pursue environmental process leading to a Mitigated Negative Declaration.
 - Emphasize fire protection in the design of the trail extension.

CITY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW
MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 11, 2001

TO: Parks and Recreation Commission

FROM: Joan Jenkins, Transportation and Policy Manager

SUBJECT: STEVENS CREEK TRAIL, REACH 4, SEGMENT 2 DRAFT FEASIBILITY STUDY

RECOMMENDATION TO THE CITY COUNCIL

1. Approve the Draft Feasibility Study for the Stevens Creek Trail, Reach 4, Segment 2.
2. Endorse the Feasibility Study's recommendation of Alignment Alternative 2 with neighborhood access points at Sleeper Open Space on the west side and at the Dale Avenue/Heatherstone Way bend on the east side and designate Mountain View High School as a future trail head.
3. Proceed with the environmental process leading to a mitigated Negative Declaration.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Nolte & Associates, Inc. Stevens Creek Trail, Reach 4, Segment 2 Trail Draft Feasibility Study is to determine if it is feasible to extend the Stevens Creek Trail from Yuba Drive to Mountain View High School by identifying and evaluating alignment alternatives, potential access points, associated impacts and appropriate mitigation measures. The report findings regarding the trail alignment and special concerns identified by the City Council, Parks and Recreation Commission and community are discussed further below.

BACKGROUND

The Stevens Creek Trail was first identified as a regional recreational asset more than 30 years ago and included in the Regional Parks, Trails and Scenic Highways Element of the Santa Clara County General Plan. Conceptual plans for the trail were defined in a 1980 report, "Stevens Creek: A Plan of Opportunities." In 1991, the "Stevens Creek Trail and Wildlife Corridor Feasibility Report" was adopted by the City Council and set

out the basic plan for developing the trail. The vision is to connect the City's six-mile portion to the Skyline to the Sea Trail to provide a continuous route from San Francisco Bay to the Pacific Ocean.

In 1991, Reach 1 from Shoreline-at-Mountain View to La Avenida was completed. This one and one-half mile reach was followed in 1996 by the opening of the one-mile Reach 2 from La Avenida to Whisman School and Park. Three years later another mile of trail was opened from Whisman School to Landels School and Reach 4, Segment 1 from Landels School to Yuba Drive has just begun construction. Reach 4, Segment 2, from Yuba Drive to Mountain View High School, will complete the trail within Mountain View.

On October 13, 1998, the City Council approved the Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) recommendation to study the feasibility of Reach 4, Segment 2, including access on the east and west sides of Route 85. On February 9, 1999, the City Council approved the Feasibility Study work plan with specific direction to consider engineering alternatives, cost estimates, environmental review, traffic and parking, trail safety and security, fire protection, trail maintenance, funding and overall feasibility. The Council also asked staff to maximize public participation during the Feasibility Study. The engineering consulting firm of Nolte & Associates, Inc. along with environmental, traffic, safety and other subconsultants was hired to prepare the Feasibility Study.

Community members have discussed the trail's feasibility and desirability throughout the process. The goal of the Feasibility Study is to determine if the Stevens Creek Trail can be extended in a manner that adequately addresses the community's interests and concerns. Nolte & Associates, Inc. held four meetings over the course of the Feasibility Study with members of the community who had previously shown interest in Reach 4 to elicit comments on a possible extension of the trail. The primary questions from the residents included traffic and parking sufficiency, neighborhood and personal safety, possible loss of privacy, fire control, environmental impacts and the number and location of access points. Based on these questions, additional data were collected and reviewed and the alignment options developed. Additionally, alignment evaluation criteria were presented at the focus meetings and modified based on participant comments.

A community meeting was held at Mountain View High School in December 2000 to review the trail alternatives, review the data collected and the evaluation of the trail alternatives. Additional public comment was gathered from the 75 people in attendance. Minutes from the community meetings as well as the consultant's responses to comments from the meetings are shown in Appendix G of the Feasibility Study. Also shown in Appendix G are the four Information Sheets the consultant prepared for the December 2000 meeting about traffic and parking, trail safety and

security, fire protection and environmental concerns. These sheets summarize the community's questions and the research and data compiled to answer those questions.

ANALYSIS

The Feasibility Study Executive Summary is shown in Attachment 1. A summary of the results of the considerations directed by the City Council follows:

- **Traffic and Parking**—Vehicle traffic and parking on neighborhood streets will not significantly increase with the trail extension. Pedestrian and bike traffic is expected to increase moderately near access points.
- **Trail Safety and Security**—A review of existing records show trail extensions in Mountain View and elsewhere have not brought crime to nearby neighborhoods or promoted illicit activities.
- **Fire Protection**—A review of records and a consultant evaluation indicate the trail extension can be designed so that it will not increase the likelihood of fire danger in the corridor and may improve fire fighting capability.
- **Environmental Concerns**—The trail will not significantly impact the environment if recommended mitigation measures are incorporated into the design and construction of the project. The recommended alignment of the trail has been designed to minimize impacts.

Decision Points

Based on the research results, the consultant determined an extension of the trail to Mountain View High School is feasible. Once this conclusion was reached, there were two questions: what is the best alignment and where should the trail head and neighborhood access points be located? The study evaluated alignment alternatives and numerous trail head and neighborhood access points.

Study Recommendations

Two primary alignment alternatives and one variation were evaluated. The alternatives are similar and are shown on the map in Attachment 2 along with the potential neighborhood access points. The alignments follow the creek as closely as possible without compromising the riparian environment. A 25' riparian setback from the creek is recommended by the study. Additionally, south of El Camino Real the creek buffers the local residences from the trail by running between the homes and trail in most areas.

Alternative 2, Subsegment 3 is different because the trail would travel between a freeway sound wall and a parking lot fence which would buffer the nearby apartments.

Based on the research and analysis, the report states either alignment alternative is possible from a permitting and constructibility viewpoint. However, based on the 16 evaluation criteria developed following community and City Council input, the recommended project consists of Alternative 2 to Mountain View High School with east access at the Dale Avenue/Heatherstone Way bend and west access at Sleeper Open Space. The study states, "This alignment has a lower project cost, minimizes environmental impacts, and will be safer for users." Additionally, the consultant recommends constructing Sleeper Open Space in the final phase with the Mountain View High School trail head to prevent it from becoming a temporary trail head until the trail reaches Mountain View High School. Table 1 below compares the most significant elements of each alignment.

TABLE 1

Alignment Alternatives Comparison

<u>COMPARISON ITEM</u>	<u>ALT 1</u>	<u>ALT 2</u>	<u>ALT 2A</u>
User Experience	Very Good	Good	Fair/Poor
Neighborhood Security	Good	Good	Good
Impact on Adjacent Property	Moderate	Low	Moderate
Environmental Impact	Moderate	Less Extensive	Less Extensive
Heritage tree removal	Moderate	Less Extensive	Less Extensive
Access	Fair	Good	Fair
Traffic	Good	Good	Good
Constructibility	Difficult	Good	Good
Cost	Highest	Middle	Lowest

Alignment Comparisons

Table 1 above summarizes several of the trail extension issues and rates the three alternatives in each category. The following section describes the ratings.

User Experience—User experience considers the view and route. Alternative 2A, along Heatherstone Way and Village Court, was down-rated significantly because it travels on City streets and would not be a separate path. Alternative 2 was slightly down-rated because it travels for a short distance between a freeway sound wall and a fence.

Neighborhood Security—Neighborhood security was good in all cases as the Feasibility Study research showed crime was not increased by the presence of a trail.

Impact on Adjacent Property—The impact on adjacent properties was low with Alternative 2 but moderate with Alternatives 1 and 2A due to the location and nature of the neighborhood access points.

Environmental Impact—The environmental impact was higher with Alternative 1 because of the alignment and bridge structures in Subsegment 3 and the large bridge structure at Continental Circle.

Heritage Tree Removal—There would be more Heritage tree removals with Alternative 1.

Access—Access is superior with Alternative 2A since it, as much as possible, avoids locating near homes.

Traffic—Traffic was rated good in all alternatives since the Feasibility Study states traffic would not increase significantly with the trail extension.

Constructability—Alternative 1 is more difficult to construct due to the extensive bridge required for the east side access.

Cost—Alternative 1 is more expensive to construct due to the extensive bridge required for the east side access.

Environmental Constraints

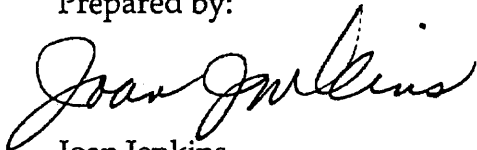
Staff recommends proceeding with a mitigated Negative Declaration based on the advice of the environmental consultant. The consultant believes the extensive amount of work accomplished by the Feasibility Study demonstrates there are no impacts that

cannot be mitigated to the level of insignificance. The estimated cost of the recommended mitigated Negative Declaration is \$30,000.

Next Steps

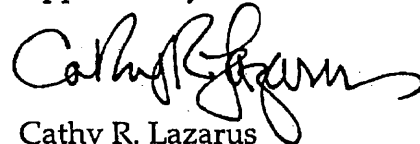
The consultant will prepare responses to the public and PRC comments presented tonight. The comments, responses and the PRC's recommendation will go to the City Council in July for action. If approved by the City Council, a scope of work for environmental review can be forwarded to the Council at a later date.

Prepared by:



Joan Jenkins
Transportation and Policy Manager

Approved by:



Cathy R. Lazarus
Public Works Director



David A. Muela
Community Services Director

JJ/4/PWK
907-05-10-01M-E^

Attachments

cc: Mr. Chris Metzger, Nolte & Associates

City Council

PWD, APWD—Ko, CPM, SAA—Irwin, PM—Kim, F/c



I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this feasibility study, undertaken by the City of Mountain View is to develop alternatives, evaluate impacts, and assess the mitigation required for the possible 1.7 mile extension of the Stevens Creek Trail from Yuba Drive to Mountain View High School. This section of proposed trail is identified as Reach 4, Segment 2, of a trail that currently originates at the Shoreline Park in northern Mountain View. The feasibility study analyzes alignments between the two end points mentioned, as well as neighborhood access points east and west of Route 85 and Stevens Creek.

A series of meetings was held with groups of local citizens, prior to holding a full community meeting in December 2000. Input obtained from those meetings was used in developing the alignment alternatives and the access point options, as well as in their evaluation.

Four focused studies were performed to address the potential impacts of the trail extension on the community. The four focused studies and the major findings follow:

- **Traffic and Parking** – Trail user surveys were conducted in 1999 and 2000. Projected traffic volumes indicate vehicle traffic and parking on neighborhood streets will not significantly increase with the trail extension. Pedestrian and bicycle traffic is expected to increase moderately near access points. Interviews with other local urban trail owners/operators support this finding.
- **Trail Safety and Security** – Review of Mountain View Police Department crime data and information from nearby cities with trails indicates trail extensions have not brought crime to nearby neighborhoods, or promoted illicit activities.
- **Fire Protection** – Review of Mountain View Fire Department reports, interviews with Mountain View Fire Department personnel, and an independent evaluation by an expert in fire safety indicate that the trail extension can be designed to not increase the likelihood of fire danger in the corridor and may improve fire fighting capability.
- **Environmental Concerns** – Surveys of the existing environmental conditions, including aquatic habitats, indicate the trail extension will not significantly impact the environment if recommended mitigation measures are incorporated into the design and construction of the project. The location of the proposed trail has been designed to minimize these impacts. A full environmental impact report process is currently anticipated, as part of the final design process, should the trail extension be approved by the Mountain View City Council.

Two primary alternatives were evaluated. Alternative 1 is located between the creek and freeway for the entire reach south of El Camino Real, crossing Route 85 where the creek currently crosses Route 85, and again at Mountain View High School. This alternative requires a third crossing of Route 85 to provide access to the area of Mountain View east of Route 85. Alternative 2 crosses Route 85 near the bend of Dale Avenue and



Heatherstone Way and runs parallel to and east of Route 85 south of this point until it crosses Route 85 at Mountain View High School. Access to the east side of Route 85 is provided at the Dale Avenue/Heatherstone Way crossing. Trail access from west of the creek is available at five locations between El Camino Real and Brook Place. Figure 1 is a strip map delineating the two alignments and all potential access points.

Based on our studies and research, both alternatives appear feasible from a processing and constructability viewpoint.

Based on assessment of 16 evaluation criteria, the recommended project consists of constructing Alternative 2 to Mountain View High School, with east access at the Dale Avenue/Heatherstone Way bend and with the initial west access point being through the Sleeper Open Space. The estimated project cost for this trail, in year 2000 dollars, is \$12 million.

The trail could be constructed in as many as three segments. The first segment would be from Yuba Drive to El Camino Real. The second segment would be from El Camino Real to the Dale Avenue/Heatherstone Way bend. The third and final segment would complete the trail from the Dale Avenue/Heatherstone Way bend to Mountain View High School. The access from Sleeper Open Space should be constructed as part of Segment 3.

DRAFT

CITY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW

PARKS AND RECREATION
COMMISSION AND URBAN
FORESTRY BOARD MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING – WEDNESDAY, MAY 23, 2001
COMMUNITY CENTER – 201 SOUTH RENGSTORFF AVENUE
7:00 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Bryant called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Commissioners Laura Macias, Tom Means, Greg Perry, Ronit Bryant (Chairperson) and Catherine Knipe (Vice Chairperson).

ABSENT: None.

3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Laura Brown, resident, requested staff to investigate the status of the dead and dying trees (evergreen and deciduous) at Shoreline park.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On a motion made by Commissioner Knipe, seconded by Commissioner Perry, the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the agenda.

5. PUBLIC MEETING

A. STEVENS CREEK TRAIL, REACH 4, SEGMENT 2 DRAFT FEASIBILITY STUDY

The Community Services Director introduced City staff Cathy Lazarus, Public Works Director; Tim Ko, Assistant Public Works Director; Joan Jenkins, Transportation Manager; and Police Lieutenant Freeberg. He stated the feasibility study approved by City Council looked at the feasibility of extending the Stevens Creek Trail (SCT) from Yuba Drive to Mountain View High School (MVHS) by identifying and evaluating alignment alternatives, access from east and west sides of Route 85, associated impacts and appropriate mitigation measures. He stated the purpose of tonight's meeting was to discuss the study findings and results, solicit public input and forward a

recommendation to the City Council. He continued with background information on Segment 2. The City of Mountain View has been working on the construction of the SCT for the last 10 years. Reach 1, opened in 1991, extends from Shoreline park to La Avenida Avenue. Reach 2, opened in 1996, extends from La Avenida Avenue to Whisman School/Whisman Park. Reach 3, opened in 1999, extends from Whisman School/Whisman Park to Landels School/Landels Park and Reach 4, currently under construction, extends from Landels School/Landels Park to Yuba Drive. Segment 2, which is the focus of tonight's meeting, if it were to be extended, would run from Yuba Drive to MVHS and would complete the portion of the SCT through the City of Mountain View.

The City Council first approved the feasibility study in 1998. Some months later, the Council approved the study plan and time line, and required the study include engineering alternatives, cost estimates associated with the alternatives, traffic and parking issues, trail safety and security, and possible funding sources. This meeting is a step in trying to get input before going to City Council.

The Community Services Director introduced Chris Metzger, Vice President and Managing Director of Nolte & Associates, Inc. Mr. Metzger stated approximately one and one-half years ago Nolte was contracted to perform the feasibility study. The first action was to collect data and get community questions from focus groups while developing existing topography, locating existing properties and talking to other agencies such as Caltrans and PG&E. Issues that came out of this were grouped into specific categories: traffic, parking, trail safety, privacy of residents, environmental and access to trail. From that, draft technical studies and some alignments were developed and included in the draft feasibility report.

Mr. Metzger then reviewed the two alignment alternatives. Alternative Alignment 1 begins at Yuba Drive, following the meadow east of Stevens Creek, between the freeway and the creek, for the entire reach south of El Camino Real, and crossing Route 85 where the creek crosses. With Alternative Alignment 1 as the main alignment, a third crossing of Route 85 is required to provide access to the east area of Route 85.

Alternative Alignment 2 is the same as Alternative Alignment 1, except that it crosses Route 85 near the bend at Dale Avenue and Heatherstone Way, and runs parallel to and east of Route 85 south of this point. A variation of Alternative Alignment 2 (2A) is to follow local streets from Dale Avenue/Heatherstone Way to Village Court.

The Community Services Director presented recommendations before the Commission:

1. Approve the draft feasibility study to endorse Alternative Alignment 2 with reach access at Sleeper Open Space on the west side of Route 85 and Dale Avenue/Heatherstone Way on the east side of Route 85 and designate Mountain View High School as a future trail head.
2. Proceed with the environmental process leading to a Mitigated Negative Declaration.

Chairperson Bryant opened the meeting for questions from Commissioners.

Commissioner Means stated one of the recommendations was not to open the Sleeper Avenue section of the trail until the trail head at Mountain View High School was completed. He asked what the time line would be between the completion of both sections of the trail. The Community Services Director stated it would depend upon funding and the overall project time line, so at this time it would be difficult to determine when each section would be completed.

Commissioner Knipe stated a number of e-mail comments were environment-related and asked about the difference between an EIR and the process leading to a Mitigated Negative Declaration. Judy Shandley, environmental consultant, David Powers & Associates, stated the main difference between an EIR and an initial study leading to a Mitigated Negative Declaration is that in the Mitigated Negative Declaration all significant impacts identified must be reduced to a less than significant level by measures that are included as part of the project and with an EIR a lead agency can choose to certify the document and approve a project with significant unavoidable impacts. There are also process differences, as there are more noticing and public distribution requirements with an EIR. For an initial study, the City prepares and circulates the document for 30 days, soliciting public and regulatory agency comments, and all comments must then be taken into account by the decision makers. The City must also adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration before approving or denying the project. With an EIR, the first step is for the City to circulate the Notice of Preparation, a public notice indicating that the City will be preparing an EIR. Members of the public and regulatory agencies can request that specific issues be addressed in the report. The Notice of Preparation is circulated for 30 days and all comments must be incorporated into the EIR. Once the EIR is prepared, it must be circulated for 45 days to lead agencies and the public for comments. Then, there is an official response period where the City prepares formal responses to comments and makes changes to the document as necessary, and any public hearing must be

included in what is called an amendment to the draft EIR. The EIR must be certified by the City prior to approving or denying the project.

Commissioner Kripe asked if an EIR is necessary for the City. Ms. Shandley stated no. She stated that based on information obtained thus far on the alignment, the project is eligible for a Mitigated Negative Declaration. Mitigation measures can be incorporated into the project to avoid or reduce all impacts to a less than significant level. If the initial study was prepared and found that there were significant unavoidable impacts, then an EIR must be prepared.

Commissioner Perry asked what the public input requirements are for a Mitigated Negative Declaration. Ms. Shandley stated there is a 30-day comment period for a Mitigated Negative Declaration and 45 days for an EIR. An EIR also requires a formal response to the questions raised. A Mitigated Negative Declaration does not require formal responses to questions raised. Both the EIR and a Mitigated Negative Declaration needs to have public hearings.

Commissioner Macias asked about the time frame and funding for completing the 1.75-mile section of the trail up to Mountain View High School. The Public Works Director stated the project would be brought to City Council in July or August of this year. The CIP for 2001-02 would be approved in July 2001; however, at this point, there is no allocation in the upcoming CIP program for any additional work on the Stevens Creek Trail. Council could, however, approve a midyear budget request if they desire to initiate a new project.

Commissioner Perry stated Alternative A-7 was only listed for Alternative Alignment 2 and wanted to know what would be the cost to connect the bridge in Alternative Alignment 1. Mr. Metzger stated it would cost \$455,000 for the bridge and access from Village Court to the east side. Commissioner Perry asked what the incremental cost would be for only the bridge connection. Mr. Metzger stated between \$10,000 and \$20,000 to connect the bridge to Village Court.

Commissioner Bryant requested that Mr. Metzger walk the Commissioners through the proposed trail with explanations on the design of bridges and location of neighborhood connections starting from Yuba Drive and including options of crossing Route 85. Mr. Metzger stated there were two proposed alignment alternatives between Yuba Drive and El Camino Real broken into four subsegments in the report. The primary alignment would start at Yuba Drive, encroaching Caltrans property to get around a private property, then come back in and parallel the creek at the top of the bank and

then undercross the tunnel at El Camino Real. This is the primary alternative, easiest to process and most accessible and acceptable to the various agencies. A variation to the undercrossing is to replace the entire El Camino Real structure so it would look like the Highway 101 crossing at Shoreline Park where it is open with a bench and you can see the water from the trail.

Another option evaluated was to stay on the west side of the creek, requiring some improvement from the bank, obtaining easement and installing a new signal light to coincide with the entry and exit from the shopping center and mobile home park which would allow at-grade crossing at El Camino Real. However, given the high voltage lines, mobile park, swimming pool and tight right-of-way through El Camino Real, enough negatives were accumulating to make this option not feasible during the public review process.

Subsegment 2 would start south of El Camino Real and then the trail follows the meadow. This alignment respects the minimum setback of the riparian and places the trail on the low point to protect some view site lines into the residential areas on the east. The trail would be at grade all the way through the meadow up to whichever point it is decided to cross over Route 85.

Mr. Metzger then walked through the access options. He stated that a trail head provides parking and facilities for trail users, whereas an access point just allows users to walk up to the trail. Currently, Yuba Drive and MVHS are proposed trail heads. The east side access at the old Emporium site would start at grade and rise all the way over the freeway and come back down to cross Kentmere Court. This access is not recommended due to cost. The second east side access is Continental Circle Drive which begins at grade, ramping up parallel to the freeway, crossing over Route 85 and then parallel down and back to the trail at grade. This is similar to the Highway 17 bridge near Camden Avenue.

The west access could come first from Kentmere Court at grade bridge similar to other existing bridges currently crossing the creek. The second location considered was a path between the greenhouse near Kentmere Court. The third west side access evaluated was Sleeper Open Space. Working closely with environmentalists, all accesses, especially on the west side, were specifically located in areas that minimized impacts. All three accesses on the west side are at grade.

The Dale Avenue/Heatherstone Way crossing is the recommended crossing of Route 85 and the recommended access for Alternative Alignment 2. The alignment of this crossing must be carefully weaved between the power lines that also cross Route 85 and is regulated by PG&E. The A-8 access (Brook Place) in order to tie into Alternative Alignment 1, which is functionally at

maximum elevation of 20' over Route 85, needs to begin a ramp structure up to the bridge. The Village Court access is at-grade crossing but involves property issues and stabilization.

Commissioner Knipe asked if the Sunnyvale Fire Department would respond to fires within the creek area and if they were consulted in the feasibility study. Ms. Shandley stated that both Sunnyvale and Mountain View have a joint response. Sunnyvale Fire Department has provided input regarding the development of Reach 4, Segment 2. Commissioner Knipe asked which fire suppression equipment has been installed along the existing portion of the trail which is developed. Mr. Metzger stated there is none. Fire Chief Revere stated there is no existing fire suppression equipment along the developed sections of the trail. The Public Works Director stated the proposed undeveloped section includes fire suppression equipment and that Council will decide whether or not to approve the expenditure as they proceed through the environmental and design. Commissioner Macias asked which option would be the least expensive. Mr. Metzger stated it depends upon which options are chosen and if the City could receive outside funding.

Commissioner Perry asked what the cost or safety difference is of development of a tunnel or building a new bridge. Mr. Metzger stated the tunnel would cost approximately \$1 million and a new bridge would cost approximately \$2.2 million.

Commissioner Macias asked if there is any grant opportunities. The Community Services Director stated yes through the ISTEA and County Trails. He stated he is not sure how much or when funds would be available.

Commissioner Perry stated that since there are more users of the trail, there would be more risk. But there would be more trail users who would be on the lookout for fires or miscellaneous crimes in the area. Chief Revere stated there is no statistical data regarding trail use and crime, and there may not be a rise in risk.

Chairperson Bryant stated that the Sleeper access at grade is proposed. She asked how tall the bridges and highest points of the trail would be near Mountain View High School. Mr. Metzger stated the bridge would be 21' above the freeway elevation. He stated that the Americana apartments do not have any windows near the trail, therefore, visibility into the units would not be a concern. Village Court will be the only problem area since some of the vegetation has been trimmed due to power lines.

Commission opened the meeting for public comment.

Gary Molle, nonresident, stated he is the Vice President of the Guadalupe Coyote Resource Conservation District. He read a letter that will be sent to City Council. He stated the fish and habitat must be protected. The EIR should be completed prior to Council's review of the draft feasibility. He stated that on Page 15 of the feasibility study, the impacts of the A-9 crossing were not identified. As stated in Appendix D, environmental concerns study report, A-9 will require concrete piling below the high water points. The operation of heavy equipment within the creek channel and the suspension of a prefabricated bridge over an approximate 200' section of the creek would impact the habitat and wildlife. It appears from an examination of the site and the consultant's plans that there will be significant impacts to the riparian vegetation and the Shaded Riverine Aquatic (SRA) habitat in other locations as well. The feasibility report also states that in places the trail must be so close to the creek bank that work will be required to stabilize the bank. The environmental studies should include impacts at all locations, not just crossings. He stated the reports described the need to stabilize the creek bank in some locations. Stabilization of banks could have significant impacts on water quality and would seem to require operation of equipment within the creek channel. The environmental impacts of bank stabilization have not been addressed in these reports, but should be. The Natural Environment Study in Appendix D states that crossing A-9 will required operation of heavy equipment within the creek channel. Mr. Molle stated he has submitted a document to the City on behalf of the Guadalupe Coyote Resource Conservation District which describes their organization's concerns regarding the feasibility study.

Rhonda Scherber, resident, stated she is currently on the Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Commission. She has waited three years to see the feasibility study. Freeways increase traffic and pollution. She stated her son, who bikes to school like other Mountain View High School students, was hit by a vehicle while on a City street. She requested the City take the opportunity to apply for grant funding for development of Reach 4, Segment 2 and that the City should look long-term to the benefits of the trail. She urged the Commission to accept the feasibility study and move ahead quickly.

Cecilia Keehan, resident, stated that "Lot 58" is designated as being used as open space. The residents were not notified that the City now owns it. She stated the residents enjoy the open space area and at one time it became littered and also fires had been started in the area. In the 1980s, access to the open space was fenced off and that now the area is much quieter and pleasant. She stated that public safety should be the City's priority.

Jay Warrior, resident, stated that he bikes to work and is concerned about the Dale Avenue/Heatherstone Way access point because it is on a blind corner

and is not safe due to the vehicle traffic. He stated he is enthusiastic of the trail overall. He requested the Commission to consider A-7 as an access point.

Patricia McGuire, nonresident, stated she sent the City an e-mail regarding her concerns. She requested that Subsections 3 and 4 not be built before Subsections 1 and 2 are completed. She stated that language regarding first emergency response from Sunnyvale is a significant omission in the study. She stated the need for a bridge was not indicated in the study. She requested the City to build the trail on Grant Road and routed to Foothill Boulevard like the City of Cupertino's segment which was routed to Foothill Boulevard in order to avoid residential abutments.

Steve Olsen, resident, stated he is the President of the Friends of Stevens Creek Trail. He thanked Nolte Associates and the Community Services Director in their efforts to obtain feedback from the residents on this project. He stated that increased traffic along the trail head is noted. This would be offset by the people who use the trail as a commute trail and for getting to downtown and not using their vehicles.

John McAlister, resident, stated if the proposed moneys to be spent on the trail could be used for other programs such as recreation class programs. He stated that Mountain View High School would be a "future" trail head but that language in the document should be changed to acknowledge that it will be constructed before the construction of the access points. He also indicated concern regarding the increased noise from the trail users. He suggested that sound walls be built and that he is opposed to the trail until these issues addressed.

Aaron Grossman, resident, stated he prefers a bridge be developed over El Camino Real. He stated that property values increase for homes located near the trail.

Karen Paradise, resident, thanked staff and Nolte Associates for the work on the feasibility study. She requested that the access point in the Sleeper Avenue neighborhood be developed as soon as possible. She also requested the Commission to look at off-road access points and not to use Grant Road for the trail.

John Carpenter, resident, stated that the trail would be a huge benefit for the North Shoreline Area. Before the trail was built under Route 85, it used to have graffiti and was a hangout. Since the development of the trail, the area has become very clean and uncluttered.

Ann Schneider, resident, stated she is the chairperson of Sustainable Mountain View. She requested that endangered species be protected. She stated she is also supportive of the trail. She stated that gravel trails are hard to roller skate on. She stated that she trusts the Police Department will monitor any crime that might occur due to the development of the trail.

Steve Anderson, resident, stated the access point to Sleeper Avenue should not be completed until the trail head at Mountain View High School is developed. Sleeper Avenue access should be done at the same time to relieve traffic on Grant Road, especially during commute hours.

Laura Brown, resident, recommends contacting the School District to obtain the number of students east of Route 85 who go to Huff School. She stated though it took three years to develop the feasibility study for this portion of the trail, that the time was not wasted. It gave staff and the consultants the opportunity to identify problems and solutions. She thanked staff and Nolte Associates for the work on the feasibility study. She stated there might be fire danger along the trail and that fire protection plan "suggestions" need to be implemented. She stated that staff time should be added into the cost of the project as well as environmental mitigation and fire protection. She stated the County-wide Trails Master Plan states funding should be included during the first fiscal year of funding.

Robert Tushinski, resident, stated and EIR should be completed in compliance with State and Federal agencies. He is concerned that certain parts of the trail area is full of eucalyptus trees. The area is in need of fire protection. He stated he is supportive of the trail.

Erika Karagouni, resident, stated she has used the trail twice a day for the past five years. She stated using the trail is safer than using City streets. She stated that she has never seen a fire nor any crimes committed while using the trail. She requests avoid crossings where trail users would have to wait at signal lights. Ms. Karagouni asked when the Commission received a copy of the feasibility study and when would the public be able to view the document that will be presented to City Council. The Community Services Director stated the document was available to the public for the past month and is available for viewing at the Library as well as available on the City's web site.

Bonnie Brown, resident, stated that the Mountain View High School has ample parking for the trail head users. Sleeper Avenue access has very little street parking. There would be a parking problem if Sleeper Avenue is the end point of the trail. Traffic in the 700 block on Sleeper Avenue is very fast and commuters cut through the neighborhood. She is concerned about the safety of trail users and increased traffic.

Ross Heitkamp, resident, asked if sound walls that are to be relocated would be between the trail and highway. The Community Services Director stated yes. Mr. Heitkamp stated that he supports the Sleeper Avenue access point and more access points are desirable.

Joan Carter, resident, asked which alternative is being recommended. Mr. Metzger stated that Alternative Alignment 2 which is the alignment near the Dale Avenue/Heatherstone Way area. Ms. Carter stated that a large percentage of the trail is constructed (bridges) and not a natural trail. The Community Services Director stated this reach has more structures due to Route 85 and the access to the Sylvan/Dale Area.

Ms. W. Joyner, resident, stated that the area which is closed off to the public is currently a fire hazard and she requested that the area not be reopened.

John Brazil, resident, stated he is concerned that residents would not be able to access El Camino Real if access points are not available.

David Paradise, resident, stated weekday traffic can be reduced if access is opened as soon as possible. Light rail access can be via the Stevens Creek Trail. Alternative Alignment 2 does not open up the closed open space.

Tom Schoderbek stated the trail is not compatible with reptiles and smaller animals. The report does not address this issue in detail. He stated the City needs to perform a full EIR and secluded areas are unsafe and that there may be more crime and fires if the trail is developed.

Walt Rau suggested the radius of the trail structure around the water tower area be wider since the tower no longer exists there.

Commission closed the meeting for public comment.

Commission took a break at 9:15 p.m. and reconvened at 9:30 p.m.

Chairperson Bryant asked what was the procedure to open prior reaches. The Community Services Director stated that the other reaches were opened once the entire reach was completed. Chairperson Bryant asked if the bridge footings are included in the cost estimates. Mr. Metzger stated yes. The budget includes the abutments and columns.

Commissioner Knipe asked what the height of the bridge at Kentmere Court would be. Mr. Metzger stated that it would be 5' lower than the fence and lower than the residential properties. Commissioner Knipe asked if there is

going to be a fence barrier plan. Mr. Metzger stated that fence barriers would be discussed during the final design decisions. There would be a 6' chain link fence on both sides of the trail and a 6' fence between the trail and the hotel. There would be plantings in the meadow area and perhaps a 6' fence would be installed near the apartments.

Commissioner Perry asked if the estimates include landscaping around the structures. Mr. Metzger stated yes, as a contingency item. Commissioner Perry asked would it reduce the fire danger. Mr. Metzger stated there are some recommendations for fire prevention such as tree and shrub trimming. There are some other items, such as fire vehicles, to access the trail that are not included. The water supply on the east side, south of El Camino Real, is included.

Commissioner Means asked if the City does indeed own Lot 58 at the A-8 access point. The Community Services Director stated yes. Commissioner Means asked what the likelihood of fire would be in the area. The report indicates that it would be more dangerous. Mr. Metzger stated the underbrush could lead to a higher incidence of fire.

Chairperson Bryant asked what the cost would be to maintain this section of the trail. The Community Services Director stated it is unknown at this time but there would be a budget request when the project is approved. Chairperson Bryant asked what the differences between approving the feasibility study versus endorsing staff's recommendations. The Community Services Director stated the feasibility study has addressed each component and that a sufficient study has been done. Endorsing the recommendations would mean that the Commission endorses the preferred alignment too.

Commissioner Knipe asked what the Commission's role in the EIR recommendation is. The Community Services Director stated the Commission can make a recommendation regarding the various components (i.e., fire safety).

Motion 1—Approve the Draft Feasibility Study

On a motion made by Commissioner Means, seconded by Commissioner Macias, the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the draft feasibility study for the Stevens Creek Trail, Reach 4, Segment 2. Commissioner Means stated he was supportive of the motion, as the Commission was given the opportunity to walk the entire trail site and there were several options to address all the concerns from the public.

Commissioner Macias stated it would have been nice to have discussed the positives of the trail in the study. Chairperson Bryant stated the report

needed to be better organized. Commissioner Knipe suggested the report include divider tabs for Council's ease in reading. She also commended staff on the in-depth study and research that was done.

Commissioner Perry stated the El Camino Real crossing should not be at grade. He suggested avoiding Route 85 traffic as much as possible and supported the tunnel option. Commissioner Means also supported the tunnel option. The Community Services Director clarified this access point is not part of the feasibility study but will be studied later.

Commissioner Means stated he supports Alternative Alignment 2 as it addresses some concerns of the Diercx Drive neighborhood access. He recognizes increased traffic may be an issue and Alternative Alignment 2A is not recommended so the neighborhood will not be affected.

Commissioner Macias stated she also supports Alternative Alignment 2.

Commissioner Perry stated he supports Alternative Alignment 1 as it is a better trail experience for users.

Chairperson Bryant stated she supports Alternative Alignment 2. Alternative Alignment 1 seems more attractive but development would negatively impact the wildlife. She is concerned about the Dale Avenue/Heatherstone Way access and staff needs to discuss this issue further and suggested involving the neighborhood in further discussions. Alternative Alignment 2A is not recommended as it places trail users on the street in a high traffic area.

Motion 2—Endorse Alternative Alignment 2

On a motion made by Commissioner Means, seconded by Commissioner Macias, the Commission voted 5-0 to endorse the feasibility study's recommendation of Alternative Alignment 2. Commissioner Perry stated he prefers Alternative Alignment 1 but voted in favor of the motion to get the project completed and to have a unanimous decision.

The Commission then discussed the access points on the west side of the trail. Commissioner Macias supported multiple access points to get trail users off the surface streets and suggested prioritizing the access points. Commissioner Means supported Commissioner Macias' suggestion. He stated there were no negative comments regarding the greenhouse area and suggested more neighborhood comments be received. The Community Services Director responded there was an extensive mailing done and there was ample opportunity for input. Commissioner Macias suggested that

Access Points A-2, A-6 and A-8 be eliminated from consideration.

Commission consensus was supportive of this. Commissioner Means stated the Sleeper Avenue area was large and this should be the first choice of an access point. He supported Kentmere Court as a second choice.

Commissioner Knipe thought most people would bike to a trail and not drive and, therefore, traffic would not be problem. She supports Sleeper Avenue as a first choice and Kentmere Court as a second choice. Commissioner Perry stated he supported both access points be built to spread the impact over the two areas and suggested vehicle speed bumps, as there is a blind curve.

Commissioner Macias stated she supports Sleeper Avenue as the first choice and Kentmere Court as the second choice. Chairperson Bryant stated she prefers Sleeper Avenue as the first choice, as it is currently open space.

Kentmere Court is near Huff School and would benefit children and would be her second choice. The access from the shopping center on El Camino Real may be a good option as well since parking is available and would be her third choice.

Motion 3—Endorse West Side Access Points

On a motion made by Commissioner Macias, seconded by Commissioner Knipe, the Commission voted 5-0 to recommend multiple access points and Sleeper Avenue access be the first priority and Kentmere Court be the second priority and, if possible, both access points be built concurrently and a third access point be located at the shopping center. The Community Services Director stated the City does not own the property at the shopping center and the City will need to get an easement.

The Commission asked the difference between a neighborhood access point and a trail head development. The Community Services Director stated trail heads have rest rooms, drinking fountains and a parking area. Neighborhood access points do not have these features. Commissioner Means asked if Landels School parking is available for the public. The Community Services Director stated only after school and on weekends.

The Commission then discussed access on the east side of the trail. Chairperson Bryant stated there is no ideal access point at either the Continental Circle or Village Court area and more study needs to be done to select ideal access site locations in these two areas. She recommended an access point at the Emporium site be included as well.

Commissioner Perry stated he is concerned about the Dale Avenue/Heatherstone Way (A-5) access point since cars will not be expecting trail users along the roadway. The cars in the area drive fast. He also supported the Emporium site over the Continental Circle site.

Commissioner Knipe stated she is concerned about the safety at the Dale Avenue/Heatherstone Way area but there is no other good alternative. Emporium would be her second choice and Village Court her third choice.

Commissioner Perry stated if there is an access point at the Emporium site, there should be signage directing traffic to existing parking lots.

Motion 4—Endorse East Side Access Points at Dale Avenue/Heatherstone Way and Emporium Site

On a motion made by Commissioner Macias, seconded by Commissioner Knipe, Commission voted 4-1 (Perry opposed), to recommend multiple access points on the east side in the order of priority. First, the Dale Avenue/Heatherstone Way site (A-5) access point and the Emporium site (AO) as the second choice access point.

Commissioner Means requested that the access points be open within one year of the Mountain View High School trail head opening. Chairperson Bryant asked if the available funding would be only to complete part of the trail or the entire project. The Community Services Director stated only part of the project is funded. Commissioner Means asked if there are any access points along the developed part of the trail that were constructed after that section of the trail was developed. The Community Services Director stated yes, at creek side.

Commissioner Perry asked how long it would take to obtain \$12 million to completely fund the trail. The Community Services Director stated the scope of the project is very large and difficult to estimate a time line at this point. The funding for the Grant section is unknown and it could be up to five years before funding is complete.

Chairperson Bryant suggested the entire trail section be developed before opening it via the access points. Commissioner Perry stated perhaps the City can develop the section just south of El Camino Real first and the meadow to Mountain View High School section separately. Commissioner Macias said she supports opening trail sections as soon as they are completed. Commissioner Means prefers access be opened as soon as it is completed.

Motion 5—Recommend Access to the Trail be Available as Each Subsegment is Constructed

On a motion made by Commissioner Means, seconded by Commissioner Macias, Commission voted 4-1 (Bryant opposed) to recommend access be available as each subsegment is constructed.

The Commission discussed the issue of the environment process leading to a Mitigated Negative Declaration.

Commissioner Macias stated an EIR might be necessary to mitigate some of the environmental concerns raised. Commissioner Knipe asked if the Commission does not recommend an EIR, can Council still require one be developed. The Community Services Director stated yes. Chairperson Bryant asked why an EIR would be more stringent. Ms. Shandley, the environmental consultant, stated an EIR is required to evaluate on a qualitative and comparative level environmental impacts of alternatives to the project and looks at cumulative impacts of the project. Mountain View's Initial Study process is very thorough and has the same level of study as an EIR.

She also stated that the public process for a Mitigated Negative Declaration also includes an Initial Study. Staff would review the Initial Study and a public review by regulating agencies also would be held. The City would then review these comments, but the comments do not need formal written responses. However, the comments would need to be summarized and included in the report as well as mitigated measures to be taken. An EIR requires a 45-day review. Staff prepares written responses and revisions to the draft EIR and both of the documents would need to be certified by the City Council.

Chairperson Bryant asked about the other reaches and how they were reviewed. Tim Ko, Assistant Public Works Director, stated a Mitigated Negative Declaration was prepared, not an EIR.

Motion 6—Endorse Proceeding with Environmental Process Leading to a Mitigated Negative Declaration

On a motion made by Commissioner Knipe, seconded by Commissioner Means, the Commission voted 5-0 to proceed with the environmental process leading to a Mitigated Negative Declaration. Commissioner Perry asked to amend the motion to require formal responses as in an EIR. The Community Services Director stated any comments and concerns will be part of the public record but no formal responses would be sent since staff is not required to do

so. Commissioner Knipe stated she does not accept Commissioner Perry's amendment to the motion. Chairperson Bryant stated that the public has the opportunity to have input at Council meetings. Commissioner Knipe added that the City is very diligent in getting input on the projects and feels comfortable not requiring the City to respond to each public concern.

Chairperson Bryant made a motion to recommend as part of the process an additional study regarding the eastern access points be performed to see if they can be improved upon or that the concerns be mitigated. The Community Services Director stated the design process is an ideal time to discuss this item. Public input will be obtained at this time as well. The Commission did not vote on the motion since there was no second.

Motion 7—Emphasis be Placed during Design on Fire Prevention

On a motion made by Chairperson Bryant, seconded by Commissioner Perry, the Commission voted 5-0 to recommend that particular focus be placed on fire hazard mitigation working with the community and Mountain View Fire Department and Sunnyvale Fire Department. Commissioner Macias stated the study of the fire protection plan indicates existing trail sections are of more concern than the undeveloped section. Chairperson Bryant stated she believes it is a hazardous condition. Commissioner Means asked her why she thinks this area is any different than other sections of the completed trail. Alternative Alignment 2 avoids problem areas and that trimming and landscaping mitigates the fire concern. Chairperson Bryant stated the meadow area can be quite dry. Commissioner Macias asked if the Commission should go on record acknowledging the fire section recommendations. Chairperson Bryant stated perhaps vehicle access can be mitigated.

The Community Services Director stated the recommendations made by the Commission this evening will be presented to the City Council at an upcoming meeting.

6. COMMITTEE/STAFF COMMENTS, QUESTIONS, COMMITTEE REPORTS—
None.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The Commission adjourned at 11:02 p.m.

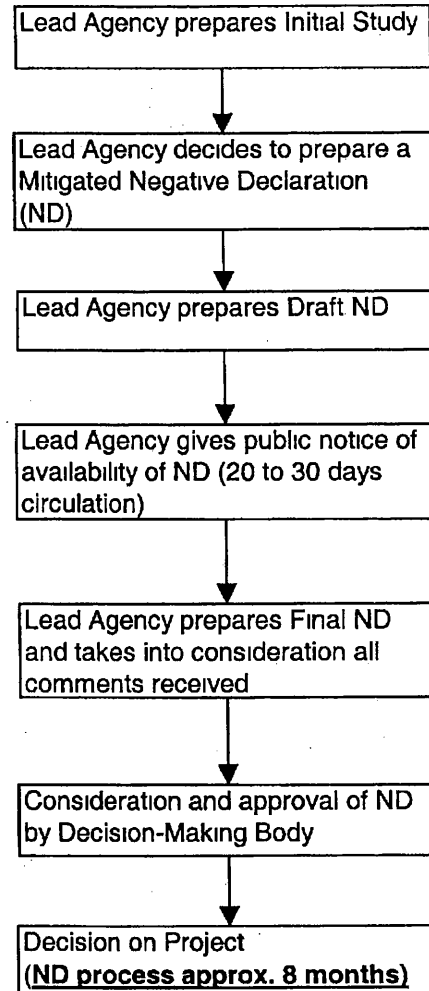
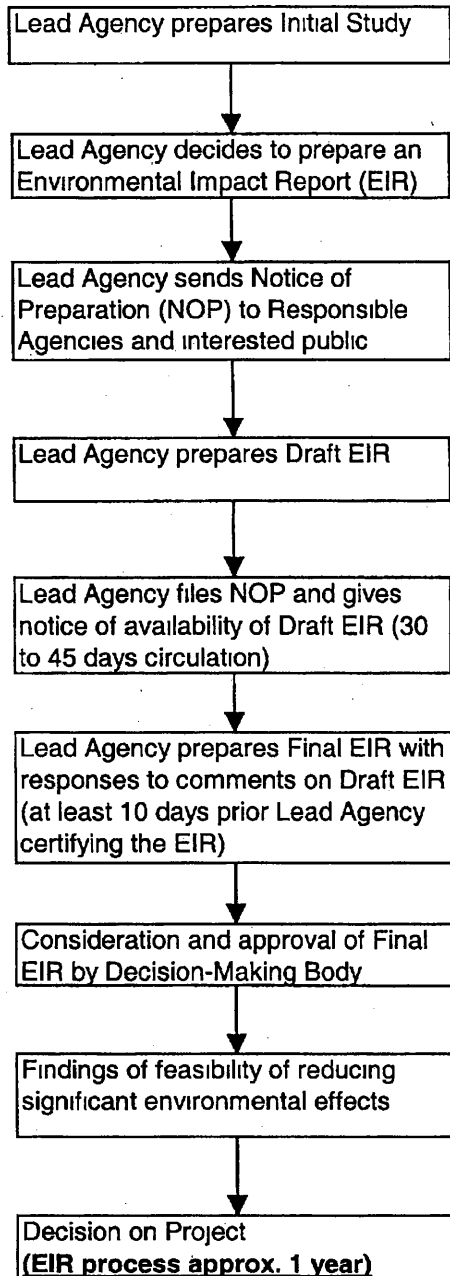
Respectfully submitted,

Jayne Matsumoto
Executive Assistant

JM/1/CSD
202-05-23-01mn^

CEQA PROCESS FLOWCHART

Differences Between
Environmental Impact Report and Mitigated Negative Declaration

Environmental Impact Report**vs. Mitigated Negative Declaration**

** A Mitigated Negative Declaration requires that all significant impacts be avoided or reduced to a less than significant level by measures that are included as part of the project.

** An EIR must only identify mitigation for significant impacts and can be certified, and a project can then be approved with either significant or unavoidable impacts.

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE MOUNTAIN VIEW CITY COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 27, 2001

CITY HALL – 500 CASTRO STREET

5:30 P.M.—CLOSED SESSION

7:30 P.M.—OPEN SESSION

5:30 P.M.—CLOSED SESSION

A. CLOSED SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT (OPEN SESSION)

At 5:30 p.m., an announcement was made by the Mayor, who described the items the Council would consider on the Closed Session agenda below.

Councilmember Zoglin absent; all other Councilmembers present.

B. CLOSED SESSION

- Conference with Labor Negotiator—Labor Negotiations (§54957.6)—
Agency Designated Representative: City of Mountain View Employee
Services Director Kathy Farrar; Employee Organization: Unrepresented
Employees
- Public Employee Performance Evaluations (§54957)—Titles: City Auditor,
City Clerk, City Attorney, City Manager

The Closed Session concluded at 7:10 p.m.

7:30 P.M.—OPEN SESSION

1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. with Mayor Ambra presiding.

2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Councilmembers Faravelli, Kasperzak, Pear, Stasek,
Vice Mayor Lieber and Mayor Ambra.

ABSENT: Councilmember Zoglin (until 8:10 p.m.).

He also reminded that using Water Fund money for special projects violates Proposition 218.

Ed Flowers, Mountain View, thanked the Council for their support of the Space Camp for kids and for the City's energy conservation efforts.

Lisa Tatum, pastor of Trinity Methodist Church, thanked staff and Council for reducing the church's parking assessment fee.

7. NEW BUSINESS

7.1—STEVENS CREEK TRAIL, REACH 4, SEGMENT 2 DRAFT FEASIBILITY REPORT

The Community Services Director explained that Reach 4, Segment 2 of the Stevens Creek Trail has been under consideration since 1998. At that time, the Council approved studying the feasibility of extending the trail from Yuba Drive to Mountain View High School and asked the alignment alternatives, potential access points, associated impacts and appropriate mitigation measures be identified and evaluated. In 1999, the Council approved a work plan on the project which asked for engineering alternatives, cost estimates, environmental impacts, traffic and parking, trail safety and security, fire protection, trail maintenance and funding to be studied. He noted that the Council requested that particular emphasis be placed on public input throughout the study process.

Chris Metzger, Vice President and Managing Director of Nolte & Associates, Inc., reviewed the major elements of the study, including alignment and access point alternatives, methodology and findings and recommendations. He first gave an overview of the project and then explained the major issues that arose during the study and outlined the results of studies done to research those issues as follows: (1) they do not anticipate significant increases in vehicular use adjacent to the trail heads; (2) there will not be any additional crime brought to the neighborhood and there are opportunities to mitigate and reduce privacy issues related to the trail; (3) there is an existing fire hazard with or without the trail, the trail is not expected to increase that hazard and there are opportunities to mitigate any fire hazard; (4) there would be less than significant environmental impacts due to the construction and any that arise can be mitigated; and (5) potential user impacts can be mitigated with trail design.

Mr. Metzger then walked through the alignment alternatives, breaking them into subsegments, and noted that staff recommends Alignment Alternative 2, with a minimum of a west access at Sleeper Avenue Open Space and an east access at the Dale Avenue/Heatherstone Way curve.

The Community Services Director continued that the draft feasibility study was presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC), which voted to approve Segment 2, to endorse Alignment Alternative 2 and to pursue the environmental process leading to a Mitigated Negative Declaration. In addition, the PRC recommended three west side access points and two east side access points in order of preference, to open each Reach 4 subsegment as construction is completed, and to emphasize fire protection and that staff work with both Sunnyvale and Mountain View Fire Departments during the design phase of the trail.

He explained that the next step is to conduct the environmental review process which will cost approximately \$50,000 and will require about 10 months to prepare. He noted that should the Council wish to proceed, staff will return to a future Council meeting with a plan to prepare the Mitigated Negative Declaration, including the selection of a consultant and a request for funding.

A Councilmember asked, in reference to a Mitigated Negative Declaration and the Fire recommendation, if an EIR study would answer some of the concerns brought up by neighbors and if it would affect the time schedule. The City Attorney responded that staff would perform an Initial Study and determine whether they could do it through a Mitigated Negative Declaration. He noted that an EIR takes more time and costs more money but would analyze project alternatives and provide flexibility in the case that a significant impact is identified. He explained that if this were to happen, they could adopt a finding of overriding consideration which would allow approval of the project notwithstanding that the impact has not been reduced below a level of significance.

The Community Services Director added that an EIR would probably take 12 to 15 months and would cost \$75,000.

Several Councilmembers raised the question why they should not just do an EIR as opposed to a Mitigated Negative Declaration if the difference in time is only a few months.

The City Attorney noted that they could do a Mitigated Negative Declaration and then do an EIR if more study is warranted.

The Public Works Director added that there are two factors that would extend the time frame for an EIR, one being the selection of a consultant and the other being that the EIR process allows for an extended public review period and requires a detailed response to any questions or comments made by the public. Therefore, additional time is required to prepare formal responses during the review period.

The City Manager indicated that the most significant thing that the Council could do if they want to proceed quickly would be to provide direction to staff to

agendize funding for an environmental review, whether it be an EIR or Mitigated Negative Declaration, in order to get the process going. He added that at this point there was no funding allocated in the CIP for this reach of Stevens Creek Trail because they are waiting for policy direction from the Council on the next steps after this feasibility study.

A Councilmember asked if the Guadalupe Coyote Resource Conservation District (GCRCD) has jurisdiction over the City and what their specific role is in this process. The Public Works Director responded that the GCRCD is a special district in Santa Clara County with an appointed board of directors.

Judy Shandley, David Powers & Associates, environmental consultants for the feasibility study, added that the GCRCD is a trustee agency and an overseer of creek and riparian resources. She noted that they do not have any formal permitting or legal authority over resources in the City of Mountain View; however, they offer their opinions about things and work with the Audubon Society and the Department of Fish and Game to further their goals.

A Councilmember asked if staff could provide further information on this organization and what potential authority they have to pursue litigation against the City.

A Councilmember asked if concerns about the steelhead trout have been taken into consideration in this process. Ms. Shandley responded that they have and that they have been working with Santa Clara County representatives from the Audubon Society and the Fish and Game Department. She explained that they have looked at various sensitive wildlife species and, as part of the feasibility study and a future environmental document, they feel they could come up with mitigation measures to avoid impacts to all sensitive status species, including steelhead trout.

The public input period was opened.

Gary Molle, Vice President of the Board of Directors of the Guadalupe Coyote Resource Conservation District, spoke expressing concern that the actions of the Parks and Recreation Commission in regard to the Reach 4, Segment 2 addition to the Stevens Creek Trail have been inadequate and suggested that an EIR must be done because the creek will be impacted negatively. He warned the Council that should this project go forward without an EIR, the GCRCD would elevate this issue to all of the appropriate permitting agencies.

The following Mountain View residents spoke expressing concerns about environmental impacts and safety, including the potential for crime and fires, high cost to construct and maintain the trail, freeway noise and increase in traffic to the

neighborhoods surrounding the trail. Support for a full EIR was also expressed if the project goes ahead.

Sharon Siegel
Dominic Deremigio
Cecilia Keehan
Robert Tushinski
Patricia Maguire
John McAllister

The following people spoke in support of the Reach 4, Segment 2 addition to the Stevens Creek Trail, stating, among other reasons, that the trail will be environmentally friendly, will have minimal, if any, negative impacts to the community, will allow access to a natural resource that will enhance the quality of life for all residents and will provide a safe, automobile-free route for students to get to school and for all residents to use. In addition, several residents asked that the Council pay particular attention to the safety and security of the residents along the trail by implementing both fire protection and safety and security plans:

Jerry Hill, Sunnyvale
Page Thibodeaux, Mountain View
Rhonda Scherber, Commissioner on the Santa Clara County Parks
Commission and founder of Friends of Stevens Creek Trail
Ed Flowers, Mountain View
Garnetta Annable, past Santa Clara County Parks Commissioner, San Jose
Aaron Grossman, Mountain View
Jim Fields, Mountain View
Steve Olson, President of Friends of Stevens Creek Trail. A large number of
supporters in the audience also stood with him in support of the
extension.
Carol Olson, President of the Mountain View Chamber of Commerce
Karen Paradise, Mountain View
Laura Brown, Mountain View
Ruth Anderson, Mountain View
Ross Heitkamp, Mountain View
John Carpenter, Mountain View
Robert Carpignano, Mountain View, requested to not include the Sleeper
Avenue access point because trees would be cut that act as a sound
barrier from Highway 85.
Bob Brown, Mountain View
Gary Bailey, Sunnyvale
Jane Baux, Mountain View

Joan Carter, Mountain View, spoke urging the Council to make as their first priority an access point for children coming from the Emporium area and the apartment complex to Huff School, Kentmare School and Mountain View High School across the creek and freeway.

The Council also received 2 letters, 16 postcards, 27 e-mails and 1 fax in support of this item and one letter against this item.

Seeing no one further wishing to speak, the public input period was closed.

All Councilmembers expressed their support for the extension of the trail and also doing a full EIR.

Several Councilmembers suggested that they look into other funding sources in addition to the City's funds.

One Councilmember asked for staff to bring back the funding and selection process for the EIR as quickly as possible to get the process rolling.

Several Councilmembers supported including a fire protection plan.

Motion—M/S Faravelli/Kasperzak—Carried 7-0—Approve the Parks and Recreation Commission's (PRC) recommendations to: (1) approve the Stevens Creek Trail Reach 4, Segment 2 Draft Feasibility Study; (2) endorse the Feasibility Study's Alignment Alternative 2; (3) endorse the following west side access points, in order: Sleeper Avenue Open Space, Kentmere Court and El Camino Real; (4) endorse the following east side access points, in order: Dale Avenue/ Heatherstone Way Curve and former Emporium Site; (5) open each Reach 4 subsegment as construction is completed; (6) pursue a full EIR with fire protection plan and safety and security elements to be included within the scope of the EIR and direct staff to return with a request for appropriation for the EIR as quickly as possible; and (7) emphasize fire protection in the design of the Trail, working with Sunnyvale and Mountain View Fire Departments.

THE COUNCIL RECESSED FROM 9:50 P.M. TO 10:00 P.M.

~~7.2—CHARLESTON EAST HOTEL PROJECT—ISSUANCE OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS~~

~~The Economic Development Manager gave a background on the process of soliciting conference hotel development teams interested in developing a project for a portion of the Charleston East site. He explained that out of the nine proposals submitted, several teams distinguished themselves as having greater potential to develop a high-quality project and that the next step is for the Council~~